

A FATHER¹ Departing.

A SERMON
On the DEPARTURE of the
Venerable and Memorable
Dr. Increase Mather,

Who Expired Aug. 23. 1723.

In the EIGHTY FIFTH Year of his Age.

Cotton Mather.
By One who, as a SON with a FATHER, served with him in the
Gospel.

2 Chron. XXIV. 15, 16.

*He was full of Days, when he died;— And
—He had done Good in Israel.*

*Pater Obiit! — PIETAS Vivit, alioqui est
fateor, unde perpetuo mestus sis. Petrarch.*

BOSTON:

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Shop near Scarlet's Wharf, 1723.

A HATHERIDBRIGHT

УОМЯНГА

Outline of the DEPARTMENT of the

Monroe Mills Library

W. M. Nichols. 19



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Chap. XXV. 12. 18. But when he was in the way to Jericho, he met a man who had

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• ИСТОЯ
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A FATHER Departing.

Preached at BOSTON, Aug. 25. 1723.

2 King. II. 12.

He cried, My Father, my Father, The Chariot of Israel, and the Horsemen thereof! And he saw him no more.

A Great and a Good Man was now departing from this lower World. One that had been a matchless Blessing unto *Israel*, and unto the World, was taking his Departure to a *Better Country*. One of whom it might be said, *The World was not worthy of him*; And yet there were those who said, *He was not worthy to live in the World*. Such an one, as may not go away *unlamented* from a World, which has not many such to boast of!

The Withdraw of the admirable Prophet *Elijah*, unto the Heavenly World, produced the *Lamentation*, which is This Day to be improved and repeated among us. But it was a Withdraw made in uncommon Circumstances; made in a manner,

manner, how *Wonderful!* how *Wonderful!* Tho' it is Appointed for Men once to die, yet by a special Dispensation, there were Two Men, the One before the *Mosaic Law*, the Other under the *Law*; *Enoch* the Seventh from *Adam*, and *Elijah* in the *Seventh Reign* from *David*; who did not see Death, but their Spirits carried their *Bodies* with them, gloriously Changed and Fitted for the Purpose, into the *Cœlestia Regions* of the *Blessed*. What a *Demonstration* was herein given to the Inhabitants of the Earth, who so much mind *Earthly Things*, that *GOD* has prepared *Blessed Mansions*, where His People shall Enjoy *Him*, in a *World* that is *Above*, after they are gone out of This! And what a *Prælibation* of what shall be done for many *Thousands* of the Faithful, upon and after the second Coming of our *SAVIOUR*; Many, many *Thousands* of them that shall Inhabit the *New Earth*, in which there shall be no more Death; and the deadly Fruits of the *Curse* will all be taken off!

One of the Two, that were favoured with such a *Translation*, was the Prophet *Elijah*; who had his beloved *Elisha* attending on him, at the Time, when this astonishing Occurrence, was according to a *Prediction* which it seems had been given of it, every Minute looked for. While these Two were engaged in a *Conference*, doubtless about the most Important Things that such Men of *GOD* could chuse at such a Time to Discourse upon, they saw driving towards them

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an Appearance of a *Chariot* harnessed with *Horses*, all of a Fiery or Luminous Aspect. The *Chariot* parting of them, *Elijah* step'd into it, and was carried up into the *Paradise of GOD*.

I do not find in the Writings of the ancient *Pagans*, any Tradition of this famous Transaction. Two Christian Writers of the Primitive Ages, do indeed fancy, that the Greeks mistook ΗΛΙΑΣ for ΗΛΙΟΣ which was their Name for *The Sun*; and that the *Chariot* and *Horses*, which in their *Mythology* they assigned unto the *Sun*, was of this Original. However, In the Antiquities of the Gentiles, we find it believed, That there were some whom their Gods *Immortalized*.

The Figure of a *Chariot* harnessed with *Horses*, which appeared on this occasion, was produced by the Angels of *GOD*. *Elijah* had read the *sixty eighth Psalm*, which says, *The Chariots of GOD are many Thousands of Angels*. And perhaps, this Figure was the rather exhibited, because it would give some Character of the Person taken into it, and put the surviving Prophet, on the significant Expressions, which he now falls into. Upon the Ascent of *Elias*, the bereaved *Elisha* makes his pathetic Exclamation, *My Father, my Father, The Chariot of Israel, and the Horsemen thereof*. 'Tis an Acknowledgement, first, of what *Elijah* had been unto himself: He had been a *Father* to him. And secondly, of what *Elijah* had been unto his People. He alludes to what he beholds; and

and he refers to what *Israel* wanted in their *Armies*. The *Chariot* here, means, not the *Chariot* for Pleasure, but the *armed Chariot*: Such a *Chariot* as was furnished with Iron Tools to mowe down the Adversary. *Israel* could have none of this in their *Armies*, because the use of *Horses* was denied unto them; And for the same Cause, their *Armies* had no *Horsemen* in them; were destitute of the *Cavalry*, which the other Nations very much relied upon. It is here intimated, That *Elijah* alone, was instead of *Chariot* and *Horsemen*, unto *Israel*. His Presence alone, was as good a Defence unto them, as the best equipped *Armies* that could have been raised for them. Had they honoured and obeyed him as they should have done, he would have done as much to have obtained *Victories* for them, as the best accoutred *Armies* could have hoped for. Some tell us, this was a Proverb, to express the *Strength* of a Nation.

Elijah dropt his *Melota*, or the woollen Cap, which covered his Head, (and which we render his *Mantle*) when he was ascending into the Heavens. But at the same time he dropt this **DOCTRINE** for us.

There are Men, who are to be considered by People as their Fathers, and who are Incomparable Blessings to the People, unto whom GOD makes them Fathers;

Tis in Two PROPOSITIONS, to be more distinctly set before us.

The

The First PROPOSITION.

All Good Men, are *Blessings* to the People, among whom GOD has made them *Sojourners*. They are the *Chariots*, and *Horsemen*, the Defence, the Safety, the Beauty of the Places they belong unto. There are no *Good Men*, but it may be said, Others are the *Better* for them. It was promised unto *Abraham*; Gen. XII. 2. *Thou shalt be a Blessing*. Every Godly Man, is a Son of *Abraham*. GOD not only *Blesses* a Good Man, but also makes him a *Blessing* to other Men. Yea, we read; Prov. XI. 11. *By the Blessing of the Upright, the City is Exalted*. It is well for a City, and so it is for any *Society*, that there are *Good Men* belonging to it; The *Upright* ones are a *Blessing* to the *Society* they belong unto.

Good Men must be intermixed with *other Men*, while they *Sojourn* in this *present evil World*. Indeed, there will an *Age* arrive, when *Hallelujah* shall be *Sang* on that account, and we never find an *Hallelujah* in the *Bible* till we come to that *Account*; Psal. CIV. 35 *Let the Sinners be consumed out of the Earth, and let the Wicked be no more; HALLELUJAH*. But until the arrival of that *Age*, the *Wisdom* of the *Sovereign GOD* has ordered it; That the *Godly* and the *Wicked* must be together. In *Heaven*, there are none but the *Godly*. In *Hell*, there are none but the *Wicked*. But on *Earth* we have a mixture of the *Godly* and the *Wicked*. The *World* is divided into, The *Children*

dren of GOD, and, *The Children of the Devil*. But they live together in the World. It is ordered for the *Wheat and the Tares*; Math. XIII. 30. *Let both grow together until the Harvest.*

But now, *Good Men*, are *Blessings* to those among whom they *pass the Time of their Sojourning here in the Fear of GOD*. They are *Blessings*, even to those who have not in them the *Fear of GOD*; Yea, even to those whom they cannot bring to the *Fear of GOD*. And if they are so to their *Enemies*, we may be sure, they are so to their *Brethren*, and those that unite with them in the *Fear of GOD*.

More particularly,

First. *Good Men* found among a People, help to keep off the *Judgments of GOD*, which the sinful People have impending over them. The *Judgments of GOD*, won't break in upon a People, while they have these *Chariots and Horsemen* to cover them. There was once a *Sodom*, a City full of *Impiety*: There was one *Good Man*, and it seems, *but one*, in the City: A *Fearful Destruction* was coming on the City; But the *Destroyers* declared unto him, Gen. XIX. 22. *I cannot do any thing, until Thou art got out of the way*. There are many Places that have *Crying Sins* in them, the *Sins of their Sister Sodom*. The *Abominations* committed in those Places, *Cry to Heaven for Vengeance*. But there are some *Good Men* in the

the Places, and the Revenging Justice of GOD says, *I can't proceed utterly to ruine these Places, while those Men are there, who are the dearly beloved of my Soul.* We read; Matth. XXIV. 22. Concerning *Days of Tribulation shortned, for the sake of the Elect of GOD.* Verily, 'Tis a choice company of *Good Men* in them, that preserve many Places from an *Overwhelming Tribulation.* Were it not for *These*, to whom the Preservation of the Places is owing, the Sins abounding in those Places, would bring such a *Tribulation* upon them, that *no Flesh could be saved* there. Why does not the *whole World* perish, in an Universal Desolation! We are told, Prov. X. 25. *The Righteous is an Everlasting Foundation.* The *Righteous JESUS*, has a *Righteous People* in the *World*. *HE*, with *Them*, is the *Foundation* that the *World* stands upon. If all the *Good Men* in the *World* were taken out of it, the *whole World* would presently be laid utterly *Desolate*; the *Curse* would soon *devour the Earth*, and the *Inhabitants* thereof would soon be *burned up*. *Good Men* are the *Salt of the Earth*. If they were all gone, there would be so entire a *Putrefaction* upon the *World*, that it would be high time for the coming of the *Day* that shall *burn as an Oven*, and all the *Wicked* be *Stubble* before it; the *Day* of a *tremendous Conflagration*, wherein it shall be hung out as a *Blazing-Star* for a *Spectacle*, and an *Astonishment* unto all the *Heavenly Spectators* of it. Thus 'tis with particular Places in the *World*. A *Zoar* does not sink with a *Sodom*: 'Tis because one *Good Man* finds a *Refuge*

there. As the Prophet said; 2 King. III. 14. Were it not that I regard the presence of Jeboishaphat, I would not look towards thee: Even so does the Great GOD say unto many Places, that are full of Detestable Things; Were it not for the presence of some Servants which I have among you, and which I have a gracious Regard unto, I would not give you one Look that should carry any Favour in it; But I would in my Judgments on you, pour out a Wrath unto the uttermost.

Good Men are very dear to GOD. The Relation which they have to His Dear Son renders them so. The Son of His Love has Espoused them unto Himself. GOD has called them, *The Apple of His Eye*: GOD says to them, *Thou art precious in my sight, and Honourable*. Now, 'tis often so, that Mischiefs cannot be heaped upon a sinful People as they deserve, but they must involve those Good Men, that are so dear to GOD. The Mischiefs of the Captivity coming on the Jewish Nation, must be prorogued; Why? Because a Man so dear to GOD as Josiah was, must have had a share in them, if they had come while he was Living. Hence that Message to him, 2 Chron. XXXIV. 28. *Thou shalt be gathered unto thy Grave, neither shall thine eyes see all the Evil that I will bring upon this place, and upon the Inhabitants of the same*. Good Men live in the same Vicinity with a more sinful People. If the Vicinity be laid in Ashes, or become a prey to Enemies, these Good Men must needs be great Sufferers in it. But our Good GOD

GOD pitties His Children; does not willingly afflict nor grieve His own obedient Children.

Secondly. *Good Men* are *Men of Prayer*, and *pray* much for the *Good* of other *Men*. How does an *Elias* prove, the *Chariot of Israel*, and the *Horsemen thereof*? We are told, Jam. V. 17. *He prayed earnestly*. Yea, By *Prayer*, he obtained Orders for the *Mighty Angels*, to come down with their *Ministry*, for the *Good* of the *People*, for whom he was concerned. His *Prayer* did fetch down the *Multitude of the Heavenly Host*; those *Angels* who are the *Chariots of Israel*, and the *Horsemen thereof*. We are so instructed; Psal. XXXIV. 15. *The Ears of the Lord are open to the Cry of the Righteous*. A *Good Man* does not confine his *Prayers*. His *Prayers* are, as the *Ancients* called them, *Common Prayers*; That is, He prays for *Others* as well as *Himself*; *Others* have the benefit of his *Prayers in common with Himself*. And who can tell, what the *Prayers* of *One Good Man* may do, for *many Others*? We read, Jam. V. 16. The *Prayer* of such an *One*, *Avaleth much*. How *much*, None can say. A *Good Man* sets himself to think, *Whom am I in my Prayers to Remember before the Lord?* He Remembers his *Relatives*; and **GOD** says unto him, as unto *Abraham* concerning his *Ishmael*, *I have heard thee!* He Remembers those that are in peculiar *Temptations* and *Afflictions*; and he speeds as *Job* did, when he went unto **GOD** on the behalf of his *Friends*. He Remembers the *Church* whereof he is a *Member*; And the *City of GOD* finds

finds the Advantage of such a Remembrancer on the Walls of it. He Remembers the Place whereof he is an Inhabitant; And the Land is delivered because of such Innocent ones, 'tis delivered by the lifting up of their pure Hands unto GOD. He Remembers the Interest of our SAVIOUR abroad in the World. And GOD appears in His Glory to build up Zion, because He has Regard unto this Prayer, and will not despise it. In a Word, He Remembers those, who have particularly asked a Remembrance with him. And then, as it was of old said unto Abimeleck about a Praying Servant of GOD; Gen. XX. 7. *He is a Prophet, and he shall pray for thee, and thou shalt Live;* thus, a praying Servant of GOD often saves the Lives of those that are about him. GOD rescued Lot out of the Flames, because he had a Praying Uncle concerned for him. When a Ship was lost, that had no fewer than Two hundred and seventy-six Souls aboard, these were all saved, for the Prayers of a Good Man there, to whom the Angel of GOD said, *GOD has given thee all them that sail with thee.* Yea, One Good Man may save a whole Nation from Ruine by his Prayers, that the Strokes of the Divine Indignation may be diverted from it: GOD will not utterly destroy it, because a Chosen one stands before Him in the Breach, to turn away His Wrath, ready to consume it.

Thirdly. A Good Man, is one who desires and studies to Do Good unto other Men: To Do as much Good, as could be done by the Chariots of Israel,

Israeb, and the Horsemen thereof! He is often *Con-*
triving, what *Good* he may do; full of *Contrivance*,
how his *Talents* may be employ'd for the *Doing*
of *Good*. He is one of those; Prov. XIV. 22. *Who*
Devise Good. A *Good Man* is a *Man of Good De-*
vices. He has his *Projections* upon that *Noble*
Question, *What Good may I do, in my various Re-*
lations; in my various Capacities? He examines his
Powers to Do Good, and he applies them, as one
that must *give an Account unto GOD*. *Essays to Do*
Good are *Natural* unto him. He takes *Delight* in
Considering the Poor, and in *Distributions* and *Be-*
nefactions to them that lie under *Necessities*. He
is a *Comforter of the Mourners*, and he has ways in
which he *makes Glad the Hearts* that are *stouping*
with Heaviness. He has *Compassion* on them that
are under *Assaults* from *Troublers*, inward and
outward; and *Labours* to *Succour the Tempted*.
And among the other *Methods to do Good* which
are usual with them, he sets himself to *Reform*
the *Evil* which he sees in his *Neighbours*, and
Restrain them from those things that would hin-
der their *Good*. Thus 'tis in the *Spirit of Elias*,
that he comes among his *Neighbours*. Briefly,
Sin, Sin, is that which will pull down *Plagues*
upon a *Neighbourhood*. A *Good Man* therefore
sets himself, with the *Zeal* of a *Phinehas*, to pre-
vent the growth of *Sin* in his *Neighbourhood*.
He does his part faithfully, for the *Suppression of*
Disorders. He does his part, that *Vice* may be dis-
countenanced. He does his best, that where he
Lives, it may be a *Mountain of Holiness*, and a
Dwel-

Dwelling of Righteousness. It follows, *The Lord will bless thee.* And what a *Blessing* is he, who does this way procure the *Blessing of GOD*!

Fourthly. *Good Men* are the *Light of the World* they live in. The *Chariots of Israel* and the *Horsemen thereof*, do glitter with *Fiery Coruscations*, which *Illuminate the World* about them. The *Holy Spirit* has used this *Metaphor*, to make us understand, what *Blessings* the *World* enjoys in *Good Men*, and which way they are so; Phil. II. 15. *Ye shine as Lights in the World.* GOD shew'd the *Stars of Heaven* unto *Abraham*, and said, *So shall thy Seed be.* Truly, The *Children of Abraham*, are like the *Stars of Heaven*, by their performing the *Office*, as well as by their answering the *Number*, of those *Lights in the World.* *Good Men* are *communicative* of their *Goodness*; They *shed forth*, and *shoot out* the *Influences of Light* unto the *World* about them. And there are especially *Two Respects* wherein they do so.

First. *Good Men* do *shine as Lights in the World*, by the *Instruction* which they give unto the *World*. They are what is mentioned, Rom. II. 19, 20. *A Guide of the Blind, a Light of them which are in Darkness, an Instructor of the Foolish.* *Good Men* will *Instruct* their own *Families*. They cannot let their *Families* lye unacquainted with the *Word of Truth*, and the *Gospel of their Salvation*. They will give *Light* unto their *Families*, that they may not *sit in Darkness and in the shadow of Death*, but have their

their Feet guided in the way of Peace. It is the Note of a Good Man; Gen. XVIII. 19. I know him, that he will command his Children and his Household, and they shall keep the way of the Lord. He is the Light of his own House. He has a well-instructed Family. He does the part of a Light unto it, when he says, Come, ye Children, Hearken to me, I will teach you the Fear of the Lord. From such Illuminated Houses, there issues forth Light unto the World. In such Houses there is the Dawn of that Light which comforts the World. But then, Good Men will also Instruct others, as far as it may be proper for them. They will Reprove others, and, as Lights, they will show them when they are out of the way. They will Advise others, and, as Lights, they will show them the way wherein they should go. They will Exhort one another daily; and, so a Day-light approaches, when they come into the Company. Religious Discourse, modestly, prudently, usefully carried on; This is one great Instance, wherein Good Men do still shine as Lights in the World. They Speak, and so they Shine. They dart out the Beams of a Divine Light in discoursing with such as are about them.

Secondly. Good Men do Shine as Lights in the World, by the Exemple which they set unto the World. It is a thing inculcated; Matth. V. 16. Let your Light so shine before Men, that they may see your good Works, and Glorify your Father who is in Heaven. Good Men are Exemplary ones. Tho' they do not good Works, that they may be seen, Yet they

do good Works that will be seen. In the Exemple of Good Men, there is a Light held forth: By the help of whch Light, Men may shun the Paths of the Destroyer; Men may see how to Please GOD, and Save their SOULS. A Good Man does the part of a Light-House. There is that Light observable in him, which will afford some Conduct unto them that Observe it; they that Observe it may Steer by it, and reach safe to the Port of Eternal Blessedness. A Good Man could say, Psal. CXIX. 74. *They that fear thee will be glad when they see me; because I have hoped in thy Word.* We may all be glad, when we see a Man that hopes in the Word of GOD: It is a Sight of a Light in the World. If we follow what we see, and walk by the Direction of such a Light; such a Walk will bring us to the Inheritance of the Saints in Light; a Light that never will be extinguished. Such Blessings are Good Men. And, *This Honour have all the Gracious ones!* You know of ONE that a peculiar Share of it belongs unto. But then,

The Second PROPOSITION.

Some Good Men are Fathers among a People; and such are more singular Blessings unto them. Indeed all they who are the Chariot of Israel, and the Horsemen thereof, deserve to be Honour'd as Fathers among the People of GOD. But then some are more peculiarly the Fathers among a People; and are to be honour'd as their Chariot and Horsemen, and more singular Blessings among them. Some

Some are *Natural Fathers*. If these be *Good Men*, their Children have singular *Blessings* in them. They do so much to furnish their Children with *Knowledge*, and fill them with all *Goodness*, and bring down all the *Blessings* in the *Covenant of GOD* upon them, that they are to be esteemed as *Blessings* most inexpressible, most incomparable. When such *Fathers* are taken away, the *Bereaved Orphans*, have cause to make very grievous *Lamentations*, and cry out, *My Father! My Father!*— Under such a *Bereavement*, how concerned should they be, *That the Lord may take them up!*

There are some, who are *Fathers*, in regard of their *Long standing in the World*; Yea, and of their *High Attainments in Religion and Experience*. It is the Description of some; 1 Joh. II. 13. *You, Fathers, have known Him that is from the Beginning*. There are *Fathers*, that have had much *Study*, and much *Insight*, in the *Mystery of CHRIST*; *Fathers* that have had much *Acquaintance* with the *Wiles of the Devil*, and the *ways of a Deceitful Heart*; *Fathers*, that are mightily improved in *Wisdom*, and able to give *Counsels*, like *Oracles*, unto those who depend upon them. Such *Fathers* are singular *Blessings* to the People that may enjoy their *Guidance*. The withdraw of such *Fathers* is always to be *Lamented*; when it pleases the *Lord of Hosts to take away the Prudent and the Ancient*, He takes away the *Staff* of a People, as

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well as them that *Lean upon a Staff.*

Yet more; Are not *Rulers* to be esteemed *Fathers*? They must be so, or *Tyrants*. They are so, when they are what they should be. The Title to be proclaimed for one whom the *Knee* is to be bow'd before, is, Gen. XLI. 43. *Abrek*; That is to say, *A Tender Father*. *Magistrates* do the part of *Tender Fathers*, to the Subjects, when they Protect them, Defend them, consult all that may be for their Welfare: *Fathers* and *Watchmen*. To be deprived of such *Magistrates*, is to have Uncommon *Blessings* taken away. Ah! Enfeebled *Israel*, Thy *Chariot* and thy *Horsemen* are now taken from thee. 'Tis a Case, on which such a *Mourning* as that in the Valley of *Megiddo*, has been called for.

Finally; What are *Faithful* and *Useful* *Ministers* of the *Gospel*? Especially, *Ministers* who have been a *Long while* flourishing in the House of their *GOD*, and bring forth *Fruit in Old Age*, which may be *Sweet* unto the *Taste* of His *People*? *Old Prophets*; who are *Men of GOD*, and *Honourable Men*! But most of all, when the *Ministers* are such as may say unto the *People*, what is in, 1 Cor. IV. 15. *In CHRIST JESUS I have begotten you thro' the Gospel*;— *As my beloved Sons*. I warn you. Certainly, These are *Fathers*, and worthy of a *double Honour*. Such *Pastors* are *Fathers*; And if their *Voice* be not hearkened unto, the *Lord* will do terrible *Things* unto the *Children of Disobedience*. Transcendent *Blessings* are taken from a People,

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ple, when such *Fathers* are taken from them. O Exposed People, Your *Chariot* and your *Horsemen* are now taken from you. An Inroad of worse Things than *Moabites* to invade you, are what you are thus expos'd unto!

¶ And this is That Article, which I now Distinguish, for the principal Subject of the COROLLARY, which is to be the Conclusion of the present Entertainment. Certainly, The Departure of any *Good Men* from a Place, calls for the Lamentations of those whom they leave behind them. *Invaluable Blessings* depart with them. The *Chariot of Israel*, and the *Horsemen* thereof, depart with them. There may be an *Ichabod* heard on the Occasion; *The Glory*, is departing. The People have but unhappy Symtoms on them of whom it may be said, Isa. LVII. 1. *The Righteous perishes, and no man lays it to Heart; and merciful Men are taken away; none considering, that the Righteous is taken away from the evil to come.* The departure of those Good Men, who are *Fathers* among a People, and more singular *Blessings* unto them, certainly, this calls for yet more pathetic Lamentations. Yea, it may call for a *Grievous Mourning*, like that at the *Floor of Atad*. Such a thing may call for no less than a *Book of Lamentations*! Will not *Orphans* Mourn, when their *Fathers* are taken from them? They are a *Generation of Vipers*, if they do not so. But then, the departure of *MINISTERS*, whom *GOD* has made *Singular Blessings* to a People; This is what now

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now requires to be more particularly Lamented among us. It was the departure of a *Prophet*, which was thus Lamented, *My Father, my Father, The Chariot of Israel, and the Horsemen thereof!* And as *Elisha* Lamented the departure of *Elijah*, so a Great Man afterwards Lamented the Departure of *Elisha*, in those very Terms. And the Tears of a People obnoxious to very bad Circumstances by the loss of such a *Prophet*, are justly broached on the occasion. We read, Num. XX. 29. *When all the Congregation saw that Aaron was dead, they mourned for him, even all the House of Israel.* We read, 1 Sam. XXV. 1. *Samuel died, and all the Israelites Lamented him.* Yea, when a *Prophet* of much less *Figure* than these *Fathers*, was laid in the *Grave*, we read, *They mourned over him, saying, Alas, my Brother!* The *New-Testament*, as well as the *Old*, has exemplified these *Lamentations*. We read, Act. VIII. 2. *Devout Men carried Stephen to his Burial, and made great Lamentation over him.* Syrs, Can you see the Departure of those *Ministers*, who have been your *Fathers*, and whom GOD has made the Instruments of that *Regeneration* in you, which prepares you for His Kingdom, and who have Instructed you, Directed you, been as tenderly concerned for you, as *Fathers* for their Children? And will you not be concerned at it? Let it not be thought a *Solæcism*, if I tell you, That such *Ministers* are your *Mothers* too. Have they not *Travailed in Birth* for you, that a *CHRIST* may be seen formed in you? Are not their *Lips* the *Breasts* thro' which

the

the sincere Milk of the Word has pass'd unto you, for your Nourishment? Surely then, upon the Departure of these, you have cause to be bowed down heavily, as one that mourneth for his Mother. Such Ministers are called, The Angels of the Churches. And will you not be concerned, when such Angels are upon a, *Migremus hinc*, and your Guardians are leaving of you? They are Stars held in the Right Hand of our SAVIOUR. Will not the Setting of such Stars, leave you concerned, *What of the Night, so darkned with you?* Wilt not thou be concerned, O Town, when thy Watchman is called off? Wilt not thou be concerned, O Flock, when thou art left without a Shepherd? Wilt not thou be concerned, O Israel, when thy Chariot and thy Horesemen depart, and leave thee exposed unto Calamities which cannot be numbered? *Lamentations, where are you?* Let your Voice now be heard on the Sad Occasion! —

—But what a Sad Occasion have we in this Assembly of Zion this Day, to come into the *Lamentations*, and with Eyes full of Tears looking after the Departed Prophet, say, *My Father, My Father*; *The Blessing which our Israel has long Rejoiced in!* When a Messenger of GOD brought a Message from Him to His People, we read, *The People then lift up their Voice and wept; and they called the Name of the Place, Bochim*, that is to say, *Weepers*. Because a beloved Messenger of GOD must no more bring any Message from Him unto us, *this House is this Day become a Bochim*; and we

we are a Congregation of *Weepers* before the Lord. It was a very Sorrowful Thing unto the *Epheſians*, to take their *Farewel* of the *Paul* by whom the *whole Counsel of GOD* had been declared unto them; and we read, *Act. XX. 38.* They sorrowed most of all for the *Words* which he spake, that they should see his Face no more. One from whom we have had the *whole Counsel of GOD* with much Fidelity and Inculcation declared unto us, has now not only taken his *Farewel* of us, but also left us in a Despair of ever seeing his Face any more, till we meet him in the Kingdom of *GOD*. *Nazianzen* taking his *Farewel* of *Constantinople*, an Old Man that had lived under him, cried out; *Oh! my Father, don't go away; you'll carry the whole Trinity with you.* And I may now say, *Such a Father going from us, how much of GOD goes with him!* What mournful Apprehensions are called for! No Man will blame it, if it be on this Afflictive and Ill-boding Occasion said, *Know ye not that there is a Great Man fallen this Day in Israel?* One who was indeed a *Great Man*, while he was yet but a *Young Man*, and a *Notable Preacher of CHRIST*, highly esteemed in some of the Greatest Churches of *England* and *Ireland*, before he had been Twenty Years in the World; and held his Esteem, and grew in it, flourishing as a *Green Olive-Tree in the House of his GOD*, until Fourscore and Four Years had rolled over him. A *Great Man*, and one adorned with *Great Endowments of Knowledge, and Learning, and Prudence*, which qualified him for *Sta-*
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tions and Actions, And even an *Agency* for his Country, wherein the most Eminent Persons in the Nation, and Three Crowned Heads, took a kind Notice of him. A Great Man, and One employed in Great Services, as a *Minister* of the Gospel, as a *President* of a Colledge, and as a Writer of many Treatises, wherein the Talents both of the *Scholar* and of the *Christian* are laid out unto the best Advantage: Some of these first Printed, and many others of them Re-printed, in other Countries. But, Good as well as Great, else what signifies the Greatness? One who at Fourteen or Fifteen Years of Age, was conspicuously Converted unto Serious Piety, and his Transacting with Heaven in this Early Conversion, was that which of all things he did Seventy Years after, with most of Comfort reflect upon. One who held on an uninterrupted Course of undissembled and unwearied Piety for Seven Decads of Years together; and in all this Time, unto his other Devotions, he constantly added, that of setting apart, at least One whole Day, and sometimes more, every Month, for the Secret Interviews with Heaven, which by Prayer with Fasting (even rigid Fasting) he might be brought into: Tho' now and then a Day of Secret Thanksgivings, was was intermixed. But the Alms, which he annexed unto these things, were such as would be hardly Credible! One who was ever a Faithful Witness for the Cause of GOD, and of Truth, and of Piety; and unto his Faith, he added a Courage which carried some-
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what of the *Elijah* with it. And how nobly did he at last, with an Instrument Entituled, **E L I-
JAH's M A N T L E**, finish his Testimony!

Such an One, we at length saw, as long ago as last *September* struck with an *Apoplectic Deliquium*; out of which recovering in some degree, we saw him Languishing, Feeble and sore broken; [Our Sovereign **LORD** would have it so!] Sometimes dejected under Melancholy and Irrational *Vapours*, and then again brightned with Victorious Comforts: Anon Dolorous Tortures of the *Stone*, supervened upon the other weary Days and Nights that had been appointed for him. It look'd a little *Dark*, that a Life of such uncommon Services, must be terminated with such uncommon *Sufferings*. But our *Faith* sees thro' it, and all appears in a True and Fair *Light*, by apprehending the *Uncommon* Share of Consolations intended for him in the Glorious World.

In his *Last Hours*, he over and over again, and very often declared a full Satisfaction in the *Views* and *Hopes* and *Joys* of the Glorious World, which he had for so many Years been longing for. And now, at last, **GOD** has *taken* this *Walker* with *Him*, into the Joyful World for which he had been so long waiting with his *Holy Anhe-lations*.

Of the *Sixty Six Years*, *How rare a thing!* for the Exercise of the Evangelical Ministry allow'd

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unto him, the Flock which I now Address, (You, and your Fathers) had the rare Felicity of Enjoying more than *Sixty*; in which he had the rare Circumstance of having such a Relative as him who makes this Address, for about *Three and Forty*, associated with him.

Upon You, my Brethren, there can be nothing more proper now to be pressed, than the Advice to the Church of *Sardis*; *Remember how thou hast received and heard*. And, Oh! Let the Maxims of PIETY which your Aged Pastor kept continually Distilling like the *sweet Rain* upon you, never be forgotten with you. If you should not be a People Exemplary for great Improvements in PIETY, you must give me leave to tell you, That you *cannot answer* it; Your *Account* will be given up with Grief and not with Joy.

His Ministry had more of a CHRIST in it, than is usually met withal. And if you should not be well acquainted with the *Mystery of CHRIST*, and if you don't cordially Embrace and Obey that Glorious LORD, *You cannot Answer it!*

In his Ministry, there was nothing that he did more frequently and fervently mind you of, than This; *That Persons may go very far in a Profession of Religion, and after all be Hypocrites and Castaways.* If any of you do not make *Thorough Work* in Turning and Living unto GOD, *You cannot Answer it!*

In his Ministry, he made Family-Religion a Point, which he urged with a singular Importunity. If there be any Prayerless Houholder among you, You cannot Answer it !

He rendred this Pulpit a *Flaming Mountain*, with his Warnings, Yea, with *Mighty Thundrings*, unto *Evil-doers* of all sorts, to *Repent* of their *Evil-doings*; and especially unto *Young People*, betimes to *know and serve the GOD of our Fathers*. If you have sinfully forgotten the *Exhortation*, How, How can you *Answer it* !

He ever look'd on you, and spoke of you, as a very *Loving People*: And he very much ascribed the Prolongation of his Life unto your *praying* for it. The *Generous Love*, which you shewed unto him, in the *Last Years* of his Life, and until and upon his *Death*, ought every where to be told for a *Memorial of you*. GOD grant, That you may see some *Recompence* of your *Love*, in our *Ascended Lord's* bestowing upon you a *Precious Gift* of His for a *Successor* to Him; For which you will continue *praying* to the *Lord of Harvest*. But the best *Expression* of your *Love*, will be to abound in that *PIETY* and in those *Works of the Lord*, unto which he so much *Exhorted* you.

I am very sensible, and it sensibly pleases me, That in this very great *Auditory*, there will not be One that will approve of my *Performance*. They will all to a Man complain, *That I have Spoke*

Spoke too Little ; and it will be (I again say,) a Pleasure unto me, to hear that Censure upon me. But there will be a way to make Amends for it. He that wrote the Life of his Father, which was one of the First among the many & useful Books that he published, will deserve that his own Life should be written. And if That be done, you will find, That he who Wrote so many Things worthy to be Read, was One, who also Did Things worthy to be Written, and you will be better satisfied.

In the mean time, there is an Holy Communion with the Departed Saints, to be maintained by the Surviving ; and this not only in Remembring them, who have spoken unto us the Word of GOD, but also in Considering the End of their Conversation, and the Sentiments and Enjoyments of the Heavenly World, which they are in the end arriv'd unto. As a brief Essay towards this Holy Communion, I will now put you in mind, of what I am well assured our Departed Father and Pastor would speak unto us, if he might from the Paradise where he is now Comforted, speak unto us, or, if we might Converse with him, with such a View of him as the Three Apostles once had of Elias, when they saw the Excellent Glory on the Holy Mountain.

Should it be enquired of him, Whether he Repents of his coming so soon into a Life of Serious Godliness? He would certainly Reply, No, No ; It should have been done sooner than it was. The first

Seven

Seven Years were too much to have been sported away in the Vanities of Childhood, and rolled away under the Wrath of GOD.

Should it be enquired of him, Whether he now thinks much of the *Seventy Years* all spent in the *Circumspect Walk*, the *Prayers*, the *Fasts*, belonging to a Life of *Serious Godliness*? He would certainly Reply; *No, No*; *It was all too Little*; *'Tis all richly Rewarded*. *None on Earth can conceive*, how much we find our *God a Rewarder of them who diligently seek Him*.

Should it be enquired of him, Whether he has any Complaints to make of the *Sad Things*, which he often found the *Things appointed* for him, and the *Difficulties*, the *Temptations*, the *Humiliations*, which often rendred him a *Man of Sorrows*, and acquainted with *Griefs*; especially the *last Weeks* of his *Pilgrimage*? He would certainly Reply, *No, No*; *It was a Wise, Good, Faithful Father, who ordered every Bitter Cup that was given me*. *The Bitter Cup was always a Wholesome Cup*. *And the pleasant Land makes amends for all the Droughis and Pitts, and Fiery-flying Serpents of the Wilderness*.

Should it be enquired of him, Whether if it were to do again, he would not chuse rather to be *something else*, than a *painful Minister of the Gospel*, always *Labouring hard for GOD*, and excluded from the more *Comfortable Circumstances of the World*? He would certaintly Reply, *No, No*; *The Opportunities, which my Ministry gave me to Do Good,*

Good, and Glorify CHRIST, were better Things, than if all the Wealth in the World had flowed in upon me.

But shall we go on to enquire; Syr, What now do you find that Glorious CHRIST, whom you so much preach'd unto us? He would most certainly Reply, O! Infinitely, Infinitely, Infinitely more Glorious, than ever could be expressed in what I preach'd unto you. Ob! Love Him! Ob! Prize Him! Ob! Make Him your All; and live upon Him, and unto Him.

And if we might enquire, What Advice he would now send unto us, from the Courts of the Lord, which he is gone unto? He would certainly Reply; Keep close to the ways of Serious PIETY. Don't forsake the Faith and Order of the Gospel wherein you have been instructed, as the manner of some is. Don't go off to that Lifeless Religion, and so that Irreligious Life, which evil Men would seduce you to. I have left my Mantle with you.

At this Time I say no more, but, — My FATHER, My FATHER, What is there departed with thee!

F I N I S.

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